

Technology & My Brain

Activity Guide Grade 3-5



Know Your Neuro

Quiz Questions

- 1) How many hours does it take for your brain cell connections to start making networks when you are practicing a behavior or skill?
Answer: 3-4 hours at a time or consecutively
- 2) How is technology negatively affecting our attention span?
Answer: Paying attention to multiple stimuli instead of one thing at a time splits our attention and reduced our ability to focus attention for longer periods of time.
- 2) What is popcorn brain?
Answer: The constant stimulation from electronics and screens that keeps our brain cells firing.
- 4) What is brain drain?
Answer: The effect too much screen time has on the brain in which the brain runs out of energy resources.
- 3) What is the Brain Balance Rule?
Answer: A healthy brain rule that states for every hour of screen time we engage in an hour of something else such as face-to-face friend time, exercising, paying attention, listening, talking, and practicing mindfulness.

Do You Have Techno-Tantrums?

A techno-tantrum is a temper tantrum that occurs when a person loses access to technology. Techno-tantrums may be a sign that the person's frontal lobe is not mature enough to handle that much technology use. Ask students how many of the symptoms below they have and be honest!

You might have a techno-tantrum if:

- You need to be told multiple times to get off your game or screen
- You feel resentful toward your parents or teacher for asking you to get off your game or screen
- You find yourself becoming angry or even enraged when you have to get off your game or screen
- You find it difficult to switch from screens to other activities

Activities

Discussion Questions

- 1) How does it feel when others pay attention to their screens while talking to you in person?
- 2) How do you feel about your family's screen time rules?
- 3) Do you think your use of screens increases your anxiety or interferes with your sleep?
- 4) How do you protect yourself from technology overuse?
- 5) How does your tech or social media use affect your values, self-worth, or body image?

Negative Health Effects

Exposure to screens too young and over-exposure to screens has been linked to the negative health effects.

- 1) Do you experience negative health effects due to your technology use such as sleep problems, popcorn brain, low self-esteem, less face-to-face time, less physical activity, or loneliness?
- 2) How will you keep your brain and your body healthy when using technology and screens?
- 3) Do you follow the Brain-Balance Rule? Why or why not? How could you if not?

What is Your Attention Span?

Your attention span is how long you can concentrate on something without getting distracted.

- 1) Ask students to get into pairs.
- 2) Have each student stare at a picture or read a page in a book. Ask the person to pay attention and focus on that picture or on reading for as long as possible. As soon as they think of something else or get distracted, they should tell the other student who has been timing them.
- 3) Challenge students to practice paying attention to increase their span.